

WISCONSIN WORKS (W-2) CONTRACT AND IMPLEMENTATION (C&I) COMMITTEE

201 E Washington Ave., GEF 1, Room D203

Madison, WI

July 18, 2003

10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

The W-2 Contract and Implementation Committee is the single point of contact for feedback to the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) on policy implementation related to W-2 agencies, and includes representation from the Wisconsin County Human Service Association (WCHSA), Urban Caucus counties, W-2 private agencies in Milwaukee County and the balance of state, and Tribal W-2 agencies.

COMMITTEE:

Members (Present = X)

Alternates (Present = X)

X	Bettie Rodgers, Co-Chair	DWD/DWS	X	Carmen Rivera	OIC-GM
X	Phyllis Bermingham	Marathon Co.	X	Keith Garland	YWCA
X	Liz Green	Dane Co.	X	Marcia Christensen	Forward Service Corp.
X	Connie Hendries	Manitowoc Co.			
X	Deb Hughes	Southwest Consortium			
X	Ed Kamin	Kenosha Co.			
X	Shirley Kitchen	Dodge County			
X	Tina Koehn	UMOS			
X	Kathi Madsen	Douglas Co.			
	Barb Metoxen	Oneida Nation			
	Tom Prete	Forward Service Corp.			
X	Marilyn Putz	Kaiser Group			
X	John Rathman	Outagamie Co.			
X	Terri Rapp	Wood Co.			
	Rita Renner	YW Works			
X	Teresa Pierce	Workforce Connections			
X	Shirley Ross	LaCrosse Co.			
X	Jerry Stepaniak	MAXIMUS			
X	Cindy Sutton	Rock Co.			
X	Michael VanDyke	Door Co.			
X	Rodger Williams	OIC-GM			

DWD STAFF

ATTENDEES:

Fred Bartol, DWS/BWP
Nancy Beale, DWS/BITS
Brenda Bell-White, DWS/BPS
Chuck Brassington, DWS/BWI
Nancy Buckwalter, DWS/BPS
Jill Jokela, DWS/BITS
Ron Hunt, DWS/BWP

Jane Kahl, DWS/BWI
Joan Larson, DWS/BDS
Pat McDonnell, DWS/AO
Jude Morse, DWS/BPS
Dianne Reynolds, DWS/BWP
Paul Saeman, DWS/BWI
Mary Tremain, DWS/BDS

GUESTS:

Doreen Alfred, Wood County
Jane Batha, ACS
Mary Coleman, OIC-GM
Debra Cronmiller, Emergency Shelter
Erin Fath, DOA/ State Budget Office
Pam Fendt, UWM Center for Econ. Dev.
Susan Fergus, Racine County

Carri Jakel, Legislative Fiscal Bureau
Jim Nitz, Kaiser Group
Doreen Lang, Wood County
Beth Lyden, Workforce Connections
Karyn Rotker, ACLU
Andy Sutton, Rock County
John Wilberding, MAXIMUS

RECORDER:

Amy Bradley, DWS/BPS

Introductions

W-2 C&I Committee members, alternates, DWD staff and guests introduced themselves.

Minutes Approval

The following suggestions were made for corrections to the May minutes: Deb Hughes would like her comment included in the discussion on pages 3 & 4. – She noted that mandatory partner financial support of Job Centers

without mandatory inclusion on Workforce Development Boards is taxation without representation which she found objectionable. OIC asked that the name of Doris Green be removed and changed to Rodger Williams. Motion to approve as amended was made by Deb Hughes, seconded by Michael Van Dyke. Passed unanimously.

W-2 C&I Committee Structure – Bettie Rodgers

A draft of the new C&I structure as reported by Bettie at the last meeting was distributed to members and discussed. Bettie invited all comments concerning the new structure. John Rathman asked for a call for agenda items to be sent out to members 2 weeks before the meeting. Bettie stated that that request was reasonable.

Contract Issues Subcommittee – Ed Kamin

Ed indicated that the subcommittee has not met recently. Because of the current Request for Proposals (RFP) cycle, and because competing agencies are present on the subcommittee, it is not appropriate to call a meeting at this time. They will wait until the results from the RFP process are announced.

Program and Policy Development Subcommittee – Deb Hughes

Deb Hughes states that the last meeting of this subcommittee was in May. They will be meeting this afternoon following the C&I meeting. They will be reviewing the third draft of the issue paper regarding 3rd trimester payment benefits. They will also be reviewing their issues list. There are two major issues that they will be focusing on. The first is W-2 as disability program – time limits, extension time frames, coordinating with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), supported work environments, and more. The second issue concerns the transitional jobs piece. The subcommittee is interested in obtaining W-2 agency & advocate viewpoints in the process.

Performance Standards Subcommittee - Tom Prete

Marilyn Putz gave a brief update about a conference call they had with some DWD staff that concerned which standards in the RFP are different from what we currently have, and training for next year's Performance Standards. They discussed that last year's training may have been too detailed for line staff. There may need to be a different training for managers first.

W-2, Income Maintenance, Food Stamp Employment and Training, and Child Care Coordination Subcommittee – John Rathman

The subcommittee met this morning and talked about forms coordination. Barb Albrecht from DWD, and Amy Mendel-Clemens from DHFS were in attendance. The subcommittee is exploring the possibility of an electronic forms depository, so agencies can go to one site for the forms they need. The subcommittee is still looking into identifying one person at each agency who will be responsible for keeping staff updated about new forms. An Operation (Ops) Memo will be sent out detailing how to get forms, etc. The subcommittee also discussed the use of Ops Memo vs. Administration (Admin) Memo. Admin memos should contain info important to the administration and management of agencies. Ops Memos should be for day-to-day info relevant to all workers. The subcommittee will be discussing the length of the documents and how to make it more relevant, and more succinct in the future.

The subcommittee is also recommending that DWD start coding DXBMs – system info, policy clarification, QC tips, general announcements for down times, some hiring info, etc. This will consolidate information and make it easier to read. Conference information will be moved to the training site. Any policy changes should be included in Ops Memos only and should go out timely. Policy is currently being included in DXBM because Ops Memos take too long to get out. The subcommittee is recommending that policy should definitely not be in DXBMs. Clear lines of official communication are needed. Information and heads up are good, but a clear definition of official communications dealing with policy need to be in ONLY one place. John Wilberding gave an example of a fact finding that was overturned because sending something to the Regional Office was required in an Admin Memo, but later cancelled and communicated as such in a letter. The fact finder disregarded the letter, and went by the Admin Memo only.

Nancy Buckwalter indicated that DWD will no longer be able to fund WISLine. An email was sent out this week. She asked for any suggestions for other ways to have conference call meetings with subcommittees. She suggested that the state liaison on the subcommittees can set up a conference call from here, but it is limited to only 6 lines. Mary Rowin suggested traveling to Regional Offices for conference calls. Michael VanDyke suggested using the ETN system that is in every county. Nancy said she will do a quick look at the cost difference between ETN & WISLine, scheduling differences, etc. Any information she finds will go out via email to subcommittee chairs. Using the AT&T conference system was also suggested. The call is charged to each user, not just the host, and the conference call doesn't have to be scheduled ahead of time.

Client Assistance for Reemployment and Economic Support (CARES)/Information Technology (IT) Subcommittee - Liz Green

The subcommittee has not met recently due to WorkSET being on hold & budget problems. They will be meeting in late September to re-establish some goals. Bettie Rogers asked that people contact her if they have suggestions for areas that DWD and the Dept. of Health and Family Services (DHFS) to improve services by working together. It will help to reserve resources, eliminate duplication, and improve services. Deb Hughes suggested that DWD can make better use of the BadgerNet T1 lines. There are currently two in each county: one for CARES in DWD, and one for the Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System State (SACWIS) from DHFS. Many smaller counties do not need two T1 lines. DWD & DHFS should agree on cost allocation, infrastructure, etc. for sharing one T1 line in counties where it is feasible. The state can save a lot of money that way.

Caseload Information Subcommittee – Jerry Stepaniak

Chuck Brassington, DWD's liaison for this subcommittee stated that DWD staff met with the subcommittee yesterday concerning a revised set of reports they have been working on, and which are very close to being released. They are currently testing them and revising the formats. The reports address key questions related to W-2 (what's happening with caseloads, sanctions, etc.), and will be posted on the C&I website when completed. Further discussion concerning the reports is under the "Critical Indicators Report" subject below.

Critical Indicators Report– Chuck Brassington

DWD staff received good input into potential changes and improvements for reports from the caseload information subcommittee. In going through the reports, they found a few errors, got some suggestions on presentation, and identified a couple places where DWD could find some better sources of info for the data. The reports were made available to C&I members and guests for review. Any further suggestions concerning the reports should be sent to Paul Saeman or Chuck Brassington.

Contracts Budget Update– Joan Larson

Joan Larson provided an update on the Community Re-Investment funding (CR). She indicated that the option to freeze reimbursements and apply a 2/3 cut to all agencies with a remaining balance as of 4/30/03 was chosen. Members asked why the option to cut 19% across all agencies was not chosen. Joan stated that the current option brought the cuts DWD needed without having several agencies return money that was already spent. Members and guests felt that the first option was fairer. One guest indicated that DWD has established a precedent that when DWD asks agencies to spend frugally, they will instead spend all the money as fast as they can so they will not have any money left to be cut. Phyllis Bermingham stated that their plan said that they were saving all of their CR money to supplement benefits because they will run out of money. Because of that, they had most of the money left and will lose a greater portion than agencies that spent CR on other things. Also, many agencies did not request money from the contingency fund because they were planning to use CR money, now their CR money is gone and they cannot request contingency dollars. Members were upset that the cuts are effective 4/30/03, and today (7/18/03) is the first time they have been made aware of the extent of the cuts, and told that no reimbursements would be authorized after 4/30/03. Joan said that individual letters will be sent to agencies next week.

Joan also provided an update on the Workforce Attachment and Advancement (WAA) Program. The Joint Finance Committee voted to eliminate the program. Agencies can continue spending their WAA dollars through end of 12/31/03, but there is no additional money. Agencies should spend out their current funding

and close out the grant. There still may be an opportunity for de-obligation and re-obligation, but no decision has been made yet. A communication will be going out shortly.

Food Stamps Employment and Training (FSET) funding for Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents was recently issued in the amount of \$1.4 million. Information was issued last week. Next week \$1.3 million in FSET 50/50 funds will be issued.

The Joint Finance Committee made reductions of \$2.2 million in W-2 services and benefits in the last 6 months of 2003. A communication will be issued as soon as DWD had an implementation plan. Michael Van Dyke wanted agencies to understand that it really is a \$9.9 million cut, not a \$2.2 million reduction from services statewide. The other \$7.7M will be taken from services and put into benefits. He suggested that DWD offer to sit down with the Association of Counties and agree upon an alternative to reach the same goal that will be acceptable to both sides. Counties faced this same issue earlier in the year when Income Maintenance was cut significantly. DHFS met with counties and agencies and had an acceptable agreement within 4-5 weeks. He suggested that it would be helpful to ask for representation from W-2 agencies to meet and brainstorm alternatives.

Federal Update (including TANF, WIA, and WAA), and RMS Update – Ron Hunt

Ron Hunt provided an update on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Workforce Investment Act (WIA), and Random Moment Sampling (RMS). The current TANF continuing resolution goes through Sept 30th. Not a lot has happened at the Senate level since the last C&I meeting. Next week the Senate Finance Committee will have hearings. A bipartisan approach at reauthorization is desired. There seems to be no coalition of interest that can create a majority to pass the bill as they desire. An update on any new developments will be given at the September C&I meeting.

The House of Representatives has passed a bill WIA Reauthorization bill reflecting a lot of what the President requested. It is very indefinite about whether it will get through the Senate as written. WIA authorization ends in June 2004. Again, bipartisan support is wanted. If there is not bipartisan support by January, there will be a forced vote.

The RMS requirement does not apply to private and non-profit agencies, only counties. They are required to do this under the federal cost allocation plan. A group is currently looking at RMS, and how to reimburse counties. DWD will send something out to affected agencies detailing in the rest of 2003. To date, DWD & DHFS have been reimbursing based on CARS reports. That will probably continue through 2003 contingent on federal funding. He is hoping that dual reporting through CARS and CORE will continue through the end of the year. There will be four training sessions in August held in different places throughout the State. They will be moving to a system of e-polling instead of phone polling in the near future. Because of the share of resources between DWD and DHFS, the responsibility for the lead of RMS will be moved to DHFS by the end of the year. John Rathman emphasized the importance of agencies attending the training sessions. Input and suggestions on improving RMS will be discussed at the training sessions. Ron – sufficient resources are being drawn down to cover expenses on the W-2 side based on initial data from RMS.

Local Labor Market Extension Criteria Guidelines – Fred Bartol

Fred Bartol presented a policy summary that outlines some fairly tight criteria for using local labor market reasons to deny extension requests, is easy to use to approve requests, and presents guidelines for those criteria. If local labor market data is used to deny extension requests and there are jobs, then it's reasonable to expect to provide some examples of jobs. This only applies to the issue of whether or not DWD will review decisions. Fred asked for suggestions and comments from C&I members. He also made a clarification that all extension denials will be reviewed by DWD, not just those based on labor market data. Ed Kamin stated that the definition of "job ready" on the last page is the first time he has seen this defined anywhere, and he thinks it's great to see it defined. "Job ready" today is different than the same person being job ready in 1998 due to local economy. "Job ready" is not completely dependent on the individual.

Transitional Jobs Update – Sue Gleason

The last meeting of the Transitional Jobs Task Force is scheduled for August 1st. A presentation will be made to Secretary Gassman following the last meeting. The original plan was to take the recommendation from task force, then draft legislation for implementation by the end of the Legislative session. Several Senators commented that drafting legislation, allowing for a public review period, then moving through legislature in the fall session is unlikely.

Sue gave an overview of what transitional jobs are envisioned to be. The main purpose of developing transitional jobs was that trial jobs just don't work for some people. This is a way to get some people a job and be able to draw down Earned Income Tax Credit. The business community has indicated that they don't want more paperwork – it's the reason they don't do trial jobs. It's also clear that local agencies will need more flexibility to run the program. What works in Milwaukee may not work in Door County. W-2 agencies will make a referral at a minimum. An intermediary will receive money for wages, etc., and the individual receives a check from the intermediary (employer of record vs. worksite employer).

The task force has been exploring many different options related various areas. These include: the employer of record (intermediary) vs. worksite employer, other possible funding sources, the process for selecting employers and employees, whether this will be another service option that won't necessarily have to replace CSJs or trial jobs, placement characteristics, who is appropriate for transitional jobs, and others.

Open Discussion of any Topics from C&I Members

Kathi Madsen discussed the meeting held in Cable in June. National speakers and DWD were there and no county agencies were invited. Mary Rowin clarified that it was not DWD's meeting; they were only an invited party. She will follow up and see if counties can be invited in the future.

Teresa Pierce asked about the status of the Service Delivery Plan. Jude mentioned that John Collins will do an update in September. Bettie stated that the Secretary's Office is currently being briefed on the subject. They are taking a look at the old Administration's plan, and it is on the front burner.

John Rathman asked if it is possible to get an analysis and update for the September meeting on the Caseload information reports they've gotten in the past. Mary Rowin stated that we'd have to talk to the Administrative Services Division concerning the budgetary aspects first. John also asked if DWD had continued doing that analysis on a monthly basis or if it was stopped completely. Paul Saeman replied that the reports were stopped completely. The data is still available, but the reports have not been generated.

John Wilberding discussed the Barrier Screening Tool (BST) and sanctioning prior to completion of tool or prior to completion of assessment question. He was told previously that agencies could not sanction before completion of the tool and an Ops Memo would be coming out, which has not yet been released. The Ops Memo was also supposed to detail proper operation of the tool. There is a basic memo out, but agencies need more information on how the BST operates, how it works, when you do it, etc. that the Ops Memo can address. Mary Rowin indicated that some decisions are still pending and need to be addressed before the Memo is distributed. Dianne Reynolds indicated that they are meeting with Howard Bernstein next week, and hope that there will be an Ops Memo in the next couple of weeks. Since there is no policy currently available, agencies should revert to the current sanctions policy. C&I members also stated that they need to be able to print the BST out so they can provide someone an option to take it to another place to complete it if they don't want to do it face-to-face, or if circumstances don't permit. They also need to be able to grade it manually.

Motion to adjourn by Teresa Pierce, second by Rodger Williams. Passed unanimously.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Friday, September 19, 2003
10:00 AM
201 E. Washington St., Room D203
Madison, WI